IN THE CLAIMS:

Please substitute currently amended claim numbers 1 and 6-28 for original claim numbers 1 and 5-27.

Please add new claim numbers 29 and 30 for consideration.

1. (currently amended) A method for immunizing an animal against heterologous HIV-1 comprising administering to said animal an immunogen comprising at least one modified HIV-1 envelope protein or fragment thereof, or DNA or ~~virus encoding said at least one modified HIV-1 envelope protein or fragment thereof, or a combination thereof,~~ viral vector comprising the human CMV enhancer/promoter elements, wherein the leader peptide of the HIV envelope is replaced with a tissue-specific plasminogen activator gene, wherein said vector encodes a modified envelope protein or fragment thereof having a V2 region deletion, and wherein said animal exhibits immunity to at least one HIV-1 strain other than that of said immunogen.

2. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein said immunity comprises a humoral response.

3. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein said immunogen comprises a modified HIV-1 envelope protein from a clade-B HIV-1 strain.

4. (original) The method of claim 3 wherein said HIV-strain is SF162.

5. (original) The method of claim 4 wherein said modified HIV-1 envelope protein is SEQ ID No:2 or SEQ ID No:4.

~~5.~~ 6. (currently amended) The method of claim 4 wherein said DNA encoding said at least one modified HIV-1 envelope protein is SEQ ID No:1 or SEQ ID No:3.

~~6.~~ 7. (currently amended) The method of claim 2 wherein said humoral response comprises neutralizing antibodies.

~~7.~~ 8. (currently amended) The method of claim 2 wherein said humoral response comprises protective antibodies.

~~8.~~ 9. (currently amended) The method of claim 1 wherein said animal is a human.

~~9.~~ 10. (currently amended) A method for eliciting a heterologous immune response to HIV-1 in an animal comprising immunizing said animal with an immunogen comprising at least one modified HIV-1 envelope protein or fragment thereof, or DNA or ~~virus encoding said at least one modified HIV-1 envelope protein or fragment thereof, or a combination thereof~~, a viral vector comprising the human CMV enhancer/promoter elements, wherein the leader peptide of the HIV envelope is replaced with the tissue-specific plasminogen activator gene, wherein said vector encodes a ~~said~~ modified envelope protein or fragment thereof having a V2 region deletion, and wherein said animal exhibits ~~a~~ an envelope-specific immune response to at least one HIV-1 strain other than that of said immunogen.

~~10.~~ 11. (currently amended) The method of claim 9 wherein said envelope-specific immune response comprises a humoral response.

~~11.~~ 12. (currently amended) The method of claim 9 wherein said immunogen comprises a modified HIV-1 envelope protein from a clade-B HIV-1 strain.

~~12.~~ 13. (currently amended) The method of claim 11 wherein said HIV-strain is SF162.

~~13.~~ 14. (currently amended) The method of claim 12 wherein said modified HIV-1 envelope protein is SEQ ID No:2 or SEQ ID No:4.

~~14.~~ 15. (currently amended) The method of claim 12 wherein said DNA encoding said at least one modified HIV-1 envelope protein is SEQ ID No:1 or SEQ ID No:3.

~~15.~~ 16. (currently amended) The method of claim 10 wherein said humoral response comprises neutralizing antibodies.

~~16.~~ 17. (currently amended) The method of claim 10 wherein said humoral response comprises protective antibodies.

~~17.~~ 18. (currently amended) The method of claim 9 wherein said animal is a human.

~~18.~~ 19. (currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition for immunizing an animal against HIV-1 virus comprising an effective heterologous envelope-specific immune response-eliciting amount of at least one modified HIV-1 envelope protein or fragment thereof, or DNA or ~~virus encoding said at least one modified HIV-1 envelope protein or fragment thereof, or a combination thereof~~ viral vector comprising the human CMV enhancer/promoter elements, wherein the leader peptide of the HIV envelope is replaced with the tissue-specific plasminogen activator gene, wherein said vector encodes an HIV-1 modified envelope protein or fragment thereof having a V2 region deletion; and a pharmaceutically-acceptable carrier or excipient.

~~19.~~ 20. (currently amended) The pharmaceutical composition of claim 18 wherein said modified HIV-1 envelope protein is from a clade-B HIV-1 strain.

~~20.~~ 21. (currently amended) The pharmaceutical composition of claim 19 wherein said HIV-1 strain is SF162.

~~21.~~ 22. (currently amended) The pharmaceutical composition of claim 20 wherein said modified HIV-1 envelope protein is SEQ ID No:2 or SEQ ID No:4.

~~22.~~ 23. (currently amended) The pharmaceutical composition of claim 20 wherein said DNA encoding said at least one modified HIV-1 envelope protein is SEQ ID No:1 or SEQ ID No:3.

~~23.~~ 24. (currently amended) A method for assessing whether a compound is capable of generating protective antibodies in an animal against at least one heterologous strain of HIV-1, said animal capable of developing protective antibodies against wild-type HIV-1, said method comprising the steps of immunizing said animal with said compound, depleting said animal of its CD8+ T-lymphocytes, and assessing the presence of protective antibodies in the said animal to at least one heterologous strain of HIV-1.

~~24.~~ 25. (withdrawn) The method of claim 23 wherein said depleting is carried out by administering to said animal anti-CD8 monoclonal antibodies.

~~25.~~ 26. (withdrawn) The method of claim 23 wherein said compound is an HIV-derived polypeptide or fragment thereof or a DNA or virus encoding said peptide or fragment thereof.

~~26.~~ 27. (withdrawn ) The method of claim 23 wherein said immunizing is carried out with a DNA vaccine, a protein, or a combination thereof.

~~27.~~ 28. (withdrawn) The method of claim 23 wherein said neutralizing antibodies are protective antibodies.

29. (new) A method for immunizing an animal against heterologous HIV-1 comprising administering to said animal an immunogen comprising a viral vector comprising the human CMV enhancer/promoter elements, wherein the leader peptide of the HIV envelope is replaced with a tissue-specific plasminogen activator gene, wherein said vector encodes a modified envelope protein or fragment thereof having a V2 region deletion, and wherein said animal exhibits immunity to at least one HIV-1 strain other than that of said immunogen.

30. (new) The method of claim 29, wherein said V2 region deletion comprises deletion of amino acid residues from about T160 through Y189, and wherein said method results in induction of a cross-clade neutralizing or protective antibody response.